

The Treacherous

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Summary: Why aren't there any teens in Berk, other than the six we know about? And what did Alvin the Treacherous do that was so terrible? Here's my guess, which ties the two together. Don't take it too seriously.

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When a Viking chief's wife gives birth to a son, it is usually a time of celebration for the entire village. But when Stoick and Valhallarama welcomed little Hiccup into the world, the celebration was muted. The new child was small and frail. Many wondered if he would survive to reach his first year. Was this some kind of warning or judgment from the gods?

Gothi would know. She seemed to have an uncanny understanding of these things. But she had not spoken in years. So the village sent a delegation to Alvin the Interpreter, the one who knew how to translate her odd little drawings and bring their messages to the people. "What does this birth mean?" they asked him.

"I'll go find out," he promised.

He walked up to her house, knocked in his special way, and went in. He stayed in there for nearly half an hour. When he came out again, he was pale, and leaned against the house for support.

"I have been given a message," he gasped. "Gothi says that, from now on, every baby born in Berk will be _cursed!_"

They all gasped. The message sent shock waves through the town. No one was presently expecting a baby, and suddenly, no one wanted to be. This made all of the men, and most of the women, extremely unhappy, for reasons that I can't describe in a K+ story.

A year went by; two years; three years; and no babies were born in Berk. No one would risk bringing a cursed child into the world. Rarely, one thing would lead to another and someone's wife would find herself in the family way. If that happened, then as soon as labor pains began, mother-to-be and midwife would be bundled onto a ship and sailed over the horizon, so Berk would be completely out of sight when the baby was born. The midwife hated those voyages; she got seasick easily.

Finally, after seven years had passed, people began to wonder if the curse might have been lifted. They sent for Alvin the Interpreter again, and he agreed to consult Gothi once more.

When he came out this time, his face was quite red. "Heh heh... ummm, it seems we've had a slight miscommunication. Nothing serious. She, ummm... her message didn't say every baby would be 'cursed.' She said 'nursed.' A simple misunderstanding on my part, heh heh. Silly mistake. Nothing to get mad about, right?"

The beyond-furious glares of every man and woman in town suggested that he'd guessed wrong about that part as well.

Alvin the Interpreter was quickly renamed Alvin the Treacherous and shipped off to Outcast Island, with a firm warning that he would meet swift death if he ever came back. Gobber took over the interpreter's job; he was just as bad at it, but his mistakes were so glaringly obvious that they would never confuse anyone. Nine months later, almost to the day, the midwife's workload began to pick up. But the mischief had been done. There was a seven-year gap between the children born in Hiccup's time and the next batch of children who arrived in Berk.

Hiccup, of course, was not cursed. Many thought he was, until he proved his value in his teen years. No one ever told him it was because of Alvin that he had no younger brothers or sisters.

If he'd known, it is certain that Toothless would have blasted the Alvin the Treacherous out of existence the first time they met.

THE END

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